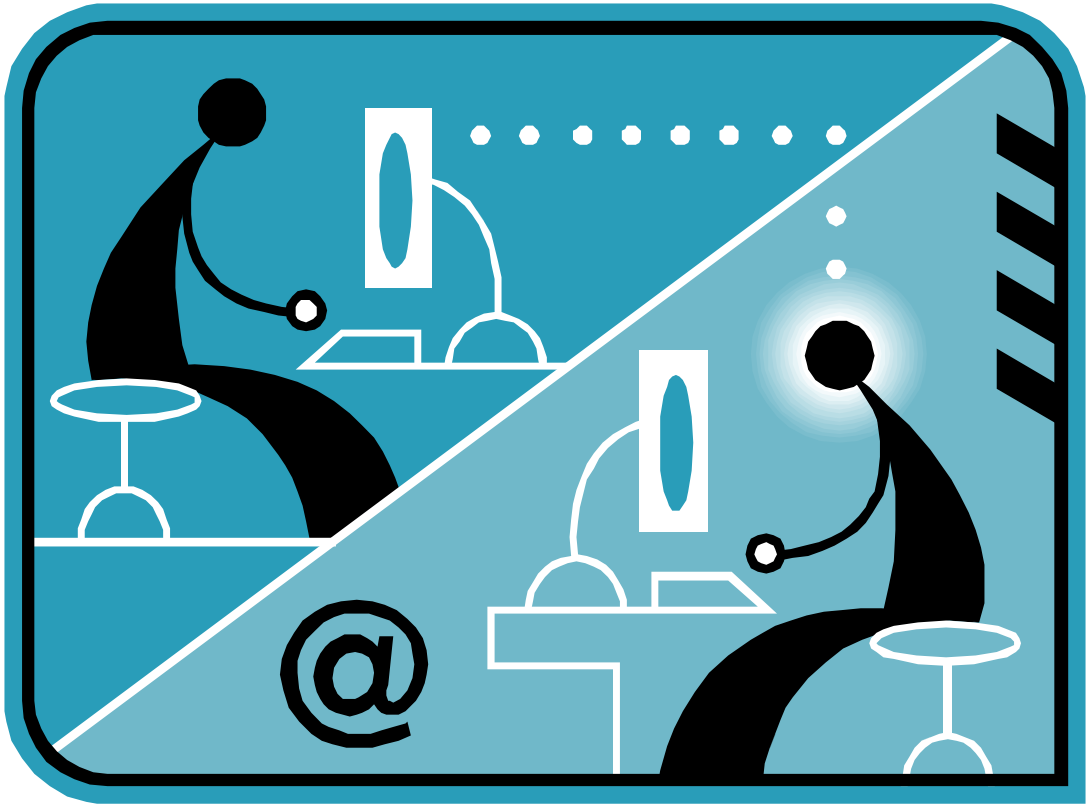
E-mail Protocol and Related Points



Communication effectiveness, efficiency, protocol, and regulatory compliance are literally, in your hands!

What's Here…

- Introduction
- Netiquette
- Don'ts!
- Body
- Spell Check & Filters
- Business Writing
- Quotes, Cites, Copyright, etc.
- Attachments
- Closing
- Heading
- Safety & Sanity
- Privacy Act
- NMCI / Navy / DoD
- Additional Information
- That's all…

Introduction, Page 1 of 6

- This *training nugget* discusses preparation and use of e-mail
- E-mail is an authorized form of professional correspondence accomplished via government owned software and hardware
- Users should always choose the most appropriate communication method/media: face-to-face, telephone, business letter, official Navy correspondence, Navy message, FAX, e-mail, etc.

Introduction, Page 2 of

- "Netiquette" is a blend of "networ
  and "etiquette" and is:
  - A collection of suggested behavioral norms designed to guide social discourse across local and wide-area digital communication networks
    (Inter and Intra-nets) [Paul McFedries, 1995)
- There is no substitute for sound judgment, so write, read, check, edit, then pause and reflect (you can always send it later)
- When you feel your e-mail is okay, hit "send"

Introduction, Page 3 of 6

- This *training nugget* is supplemental to the significant amount of NMCI training and information sources found at:

  http://www.homeport.navy.mil/training/email/

- The primary focus of this *training nugget* is on Netiquette and the effective and professional use of e-mail

Introduction, Page 4 of 4

- We now work in an e-mail cultur
  - 8 billion e-mails per day in the United State
- A recent business newsletter teased the following as the *new* job description: “come to work, process e-mail, go home!”
- E-mail users must communicate legally, professionally, effectively, efficiently and with civility -- netiquette

Netiquette,
Page 1 of 6

- View all e-mail sent and received at work as professional correspondence
- Be as professional and respectful toward others when sending e-mail as you are in person
- Address e-mail only to those recipients who need to read the message – don’t use global or group addresses unless the message is specific to **all** members of that group

Netiquette,
Page 2 of 6

- Ensure you know who is listed in an e-mail group *before* you select the group and “send”
  - You won’t miss people who should get the message
  - You won’t send the message to people who don’t need to see it
- Keep your “group” listings up-to-date

Netiquette,
Page 3 of 6

- Acknowledge and return appropriate e-mail messages in a timely manner
- Chose “reply” or “reply-to-all” as appropriate to the situation
- Ensure your response gets to the appropriate readers – and no one else
- Use the subject line to convey the essence and/or significance of your message

Netiquette,
Page 4 of 6

- Keep the subject line short, but ensure it clearly suggests the purpose of your e-mail
- Cover only one topic per e-mail
  - Ensures your message gets the attention it deserves
  - Permits receiver to take action on each message and then delete it

Netiquette,
Page 5 of 6

- Use the same level of formality when e-mailing that you would use in person
  - If you typically address the recipient as Mr. or Ms. So-and-So, then address them as such rather than by his/her first name – and vice-versa
- When replying, address the sender according to how he/she closed the original e-mail
  - e.g., if the closing reads, “Respectfully, Tom”, then address him as Tom in the reply. If he used “Tom Jones”, then reply using Mr. Jones

Netiquette,
Page 6 of 6

- Ask sender if he/she is okay with his/her e-mail being forwarded or quoted – don’t just take it for granted that it is okay

Don’ts!
Page 1 of 8

- Don’t use e-mail to conduct personal business
- Don’t send (or accept) e-mails that are socially unacceptable
- Don’t send (or accept) e-mails that violate current DOD / DoD or higher policy
- Don’t criticize, reprimand or give bad news via e-mail (do this in person – always!)
- Don’t send an e-mail in anger, or vent your frustrations via e-mail

Don’ts!
Page 2 of 8

- Don’t use e-mail to send, forward or receive:
  - Political messages
    - http://www.osc.gov/ha_fed.htm (… about Hatch Act)
  - Religious/spiritual messages
  - Inspirational/motivational messages
  - Offensive messages
  - Pornography
  - Hate mail/messages
  - SPAM, junk mail, chain letters, or jokes
  - Messages in which you are trying to sell something for personal gain
  - Rumor, gossip or hearsay

Don’ts!
Page 3 of 8

- Don’t send e-mail greetings or postcards that are related to holidays, religion, romance, or any other topic of a non-business nature
- Never send or forward anything classified confidential or higher
- Avoid sending sensitive information via e-mail
- Avoid *prolonged* technical debates and/or *prolonged* problem solving via e-mail; these are better accomplished face-to-face or by phone

Don’ts!
Page 4 of 8

- Don’t disrespect the sender’s confidentiality:
  - If you receive a “Blind Copy”, recognize that the primary receiver does NOT know you also received the information
  - Therefore do not mention the message to the primary receiver or to anyone else

Don’ts!
Page 5 of 8

- Don’t say anything via e-mail that you would not say in person
  - Before you send any e-mail, consider the following:
    - ✓ Would I want my boss to see it?
    - ✓ Would I want my spouse / family to see it?
    - ✓ Would I want my co-workers to see it?
    - ✓ Would I want my friends to see it?
    - ✓ Would I want the network administrators to see it?
    - ✓ Would I want a jury to see it?

Don’ts!
Page 6 of 8

- Don’t write e-mails in all capital letters – it is the equivalent of yelling
- Don’t use emoticons (those little smiley, frowny, or winky faces) unless writing to a close friend
  - If you feel compelled to clarify with emoticons or “just kidding”, “Ha-ha!”, LOL, etc., re-write the sentence / message

Don’ts!
Page 7 of 8

- Don’t use weird backgrounds
- Don’t use strange fonts
- Don’t append pictures of family, friends, pets, hobbies, vehicles, vacation places, scenery … you get the picture

Don’ts!
Page 8 of 8

- Don’t flame
  - Ignore small mistakes in the e-mails you receive
  - Consider your correspondents’ culture – do they all speak your language as their primary or first language?
  - Avoid caustic or sarcastic replies
  - Resist “putting them in their place” – this tactic is almost always a lose-lose approach that rapidly and unnecessarily escalates into an e-battle
  - Remember once you tap the send button (or accidental hit the enter key) your message is on it’s way and is “out there” permanently

Body, Page 1 of 7

- Use good business writing techniques:
  - Short sentences and paragraphs
  - Traditional letter writing formats
  - Avoid trendy e-mail/message short-hand and abbreviations
  - Write in the vocabulary of your receiver
  - Avoid “buzz words”, slang, technical terms, abbreviations and acronyms the reader may not know
  - Be good, be brief, be gone
  - Proofread! Ensure your grammar, spelling and punctuation is correct

Body, Page 2 of 7

- Write the most important information at the beginning of the e-mail
  - If the information is longer than one screen, the receiver may not read it all
  - If you need to send lengthy documents, use the attachment feature
- If you use “facts”, cite the source (head off the doubting Thomases from the “get-go”

Body, Page 3 of 7

- Brevity vs. verbosity – get to the point
- Don’t use emphasis in e-mail; various software and network applications deal with these differently (or not at all)
  - Avoid bold, under-line, italics, etc
  - If you need these, attach your word formatted document to an e-mail that briefly announces and explains the attachment/s

Body, Page 4 of 7

- Repeat – DON’T SHOUT (use of all upper case letters)
- Use appropriate punctuation and capitalization
  - The following is difficult to read and annoying:

    “four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal now we are engaged in a great civil war testing whether that nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure we are met on a great battlefield of that war we have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live it is altogether fitting and proper that we…”

Body, Page 5 of 7

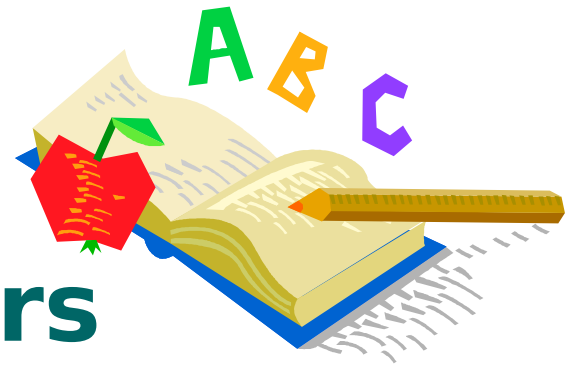
- Avoid Tabs, control characters, and other unusual characters
- Use care when embedding graphics and symbols – these may not come out on the recipient's end the same as on the sender's end – if at all (again, if these are necessary to complete communication, send the higher order/design document as an attachment or communicate with a different media)

Body, Page 6 of 7

- Avoid cute – what seems cleaver on your screen may be perceived as simple and/or unprofessional
- While remaining “brief” be informational, particularly in replies
  - Don’t *just* reply with “sure”, “yes”, “no”, “great idea!”, “not a good idea”, I don’t know, etc.
  - Mention a part of what you are commenting on or answering (e.g., “good suggestion – I’ll rework contract item 6b”)

Body, Page 7 of 7

- Take the time to review and revise important e-mails – particularly ones that affect:
  - a negotiation
  - a deal, decision, sale, contract, etc.
  - staff positions, categories, benefits, salary, schedules
  - policy
  - fees, prices, or charges
  - activities, events, products and/ or services



Spell Check and Filters

- Proofread! Ensure your grammar, spelling and punctuation is correct
- E-mail spell checkers and grammar checkers are often temperamental or non-existent
- Create and “proof” your message in a higher order word processor, then copy the “finished” message into your e-mail message

Business Writing

- The composition, quality and format of your e-mails should receive the same attention you give other formats of business correspondence
- MWR Managers' desk reference, Task 9.2 Prepare Correspondence covers the application and format requirements of the various types of correspondence used Fleet and Family Readiness Program (F&FRP) in the environment
- The enclosure in Task 9.2, Navy Writing Guidelines, outlines writing essentials and fundamentals

Quotes, Cites, Copyright,
Page 1 of 2

- When repeating / including anything published, cite your references using traditional reference citation formats
- Respect private property
  - Use Trademark ™, Registration ® and Copyright © symbols where appropriate
  - Acknowledge ownership
  - Include warnings about reproduction, duplication, electronic transmission, etc., if so warned in published works you cite or quote

Quotes, Cites, Copyright, etc
Page 2 of 2

- Obtain and retain publisher permission to include other than minor references to and quotes from published works

Attachments, Page 1 of 2

- Ensure your attachment is compatible with the software and hardware used by your intended receiver/s
- Use “Forward” vice “Reply” or “Reply to All” to ensure attachments move on to new addressees
- The Internet can be temperamental regarding attachments – communicate with your addressees to confirm they receive what you attach (you may need to send your attachment via another media such as diskette, CD ROM, DVD, etc.)

Attachments, Page 2 of 2

- If the composition of your attachments included non-typical fonts, the addressees may not see the same thing you sent
  - Solution is to use ONLY the fonts resident in and available to your NMCI office applications (E.g., Excel, Word, Power Pont, Access, Front Page, etc.)
- As an alternative, post attachments on the company intranet for viewing and downloading

Closing, Page 1 of 2

- Keep your signatures down to a professional minimum – recipients don't need your résumé
  - Don't include information that's already in the headers
  - Hold to four to six lines
  - Lose the tags lines (they are rarely read or welcomed and they are not needed)
  - Be professional
- Use typical business closings
- Be courteous and respectful
- Use the signature feature in Microsoft Outlook

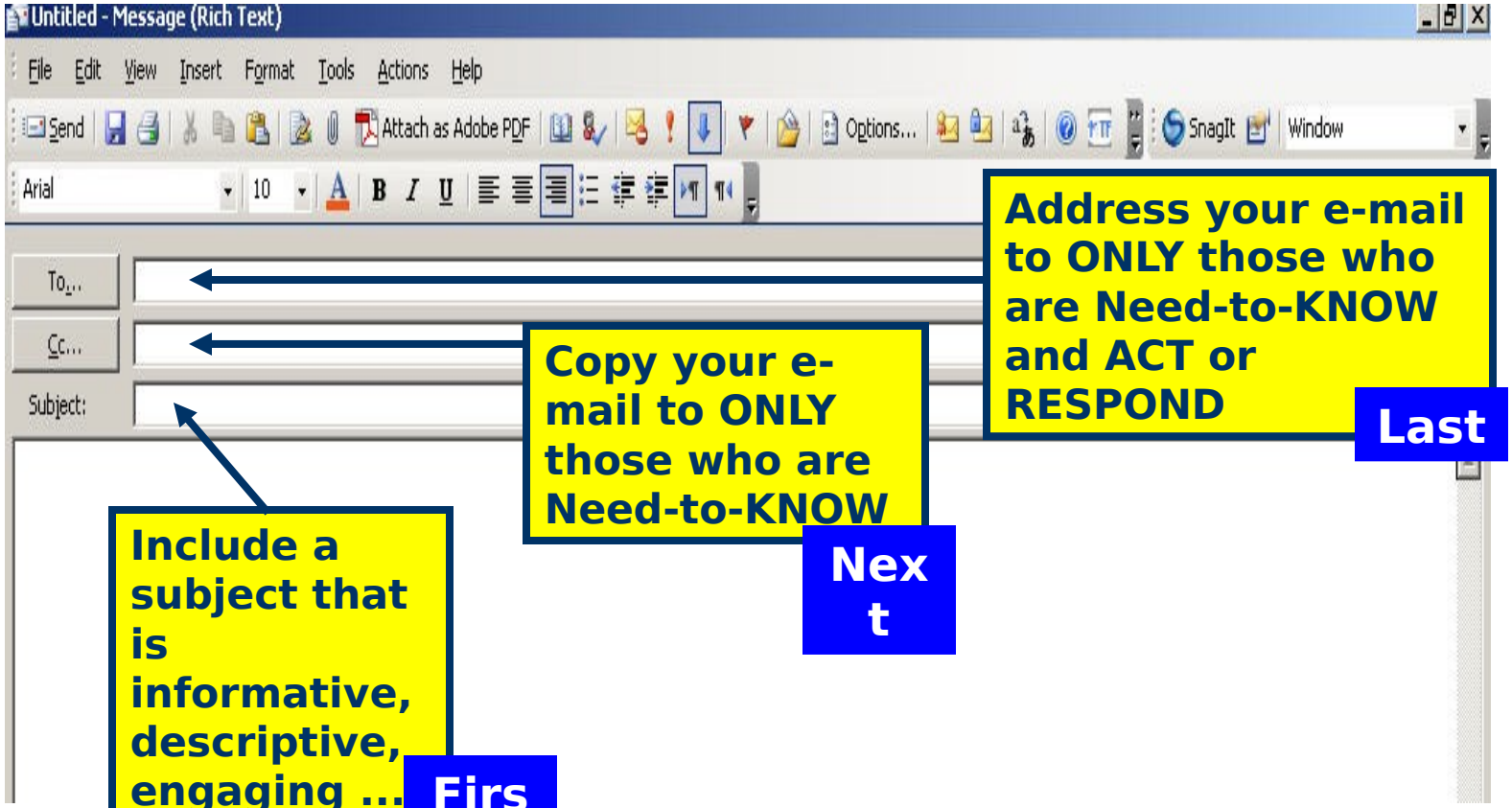
Closing, Page 2 of 2

- Use an appropriate closing and your name to close e-mails internal to your immediate work group and/or with people you regularly correspond
- Include your job title, address and so forth when corresponding EXTERNAL to your immediate work group and/or those with whom you correspond infrequently

Heading, Page 1 of 4

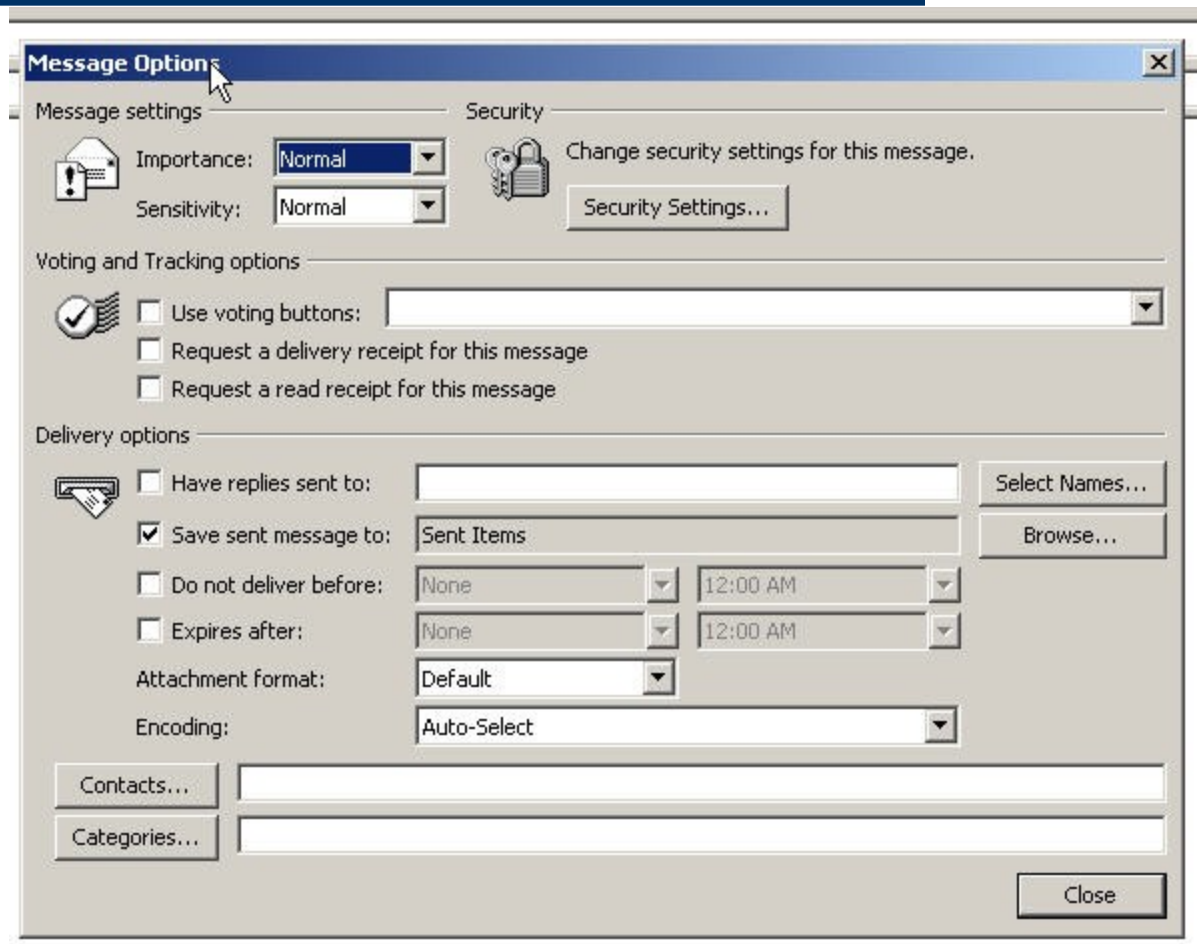
- Use an effective Subject line
- Many readers scan, make a quick judgment, then delete e-mails based on the subject line, particularly if they don’t know the originator
- Vague subject lines are often tossed without being opened
- Don’t use keywords that are typically blocked by digital security systems/applications

Heading, Page 2 of 4



Heading, Page 3 of 4

Make your e-mails effective and considerate – use the OPTIONS in your e-mail system!



Heading, Page 4 of 4

- To transmit or forward e-mail that is private, sensitive, Privacy Act Defined, and/or otherwise classified “For Official Use Only”
  - Use NMCI features to digitally sign e-mail messages
  - Use NMCI features to encrypt e-mail m

Note: These use the Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) certificates stored in the Common Access Card (CAC)

Safety & Sanity, Page 1 c

- Delete that e-mail – scan subject lines/headers and delete everything you don’t need to know or act upon materially
- Don’t open e-mails with suspect subject lines; particularly if you don’t know the sender
- Report SPAM / Phishing E-mails to NMCI
- Turn off (don’t use) the preview pane in Microsoft Outlook

Safety & Sanity, Page 2 o

- Keep your anti-virus/spam/spyware software updated
- Run your anti-virus/spam/spyware software regularly
- Don’t open or save attachments from unknown sources
- Use firewall application (don’t disable)

Safety & Sanity, Page 3 c

- An essential, safe e-mail sequence is:
  1. Write it
  2. Check it
  3. Finalize it
  4. Sign it
  5. Include attachments
  6. Enter an effective and descriptive subject line
  7. Include everyone who needs to know in the Copy To address line
  8. Add everyone who needs to know and ACT or RESPOND in the To Line

Safety & Sanity, Page 4 c

- When you are certain click on SEND
- If you are not certain delete **ALL** addressees and park the e-mail in your DRAFT Folder
- Rework the e-mail or communicate in a different way
- When the e-mail bell rings – don’t take the bait. As with other work distractions pick a time to process your e-mail in-basket
- Remember that your e-mail is a public and permanent record

Privacy Act, Page 1 of 5

- Information covered by Privacy Act includes:
  - Social Security number and date of birth
  - Financial, credit, and medical data
  - Security Clearance Level
  - Leave balances and types of leave used
  - Home address and telephone numbers
  - Home web addresses
  - Mother’s maiden name / other names used
  - Family data
  - Race, religion, national origin
  - Performance Ratings

Privacy Act, Page 2 of 5

- Information covered by Privacy Act includes, cont:
  - Drug test results and the fact of participation in rehabilitation programs
  - Negotiation of orders
  - Names of employees who hold government-issued travel cards including card data
- If, in the commission of your job, you must transmit F&FR employee data covered by the Privacy Act, ensure your file is marked “For Official Use Only – Privacy Act Sensitive: Any misuse or unauthorized disclosure may result in both civil and criminal penalties”

Privacy Act, Page 3 of 5

- Don’t publish any employee’s Social Security Number on public web sites
- If in doubt, ask your department Information Assurance Officer (IAO) before sending by e-mail
- Don’t transmit, collect, or ask for information covered by the Privacy Act unless authorized as a necessary requirement of your job

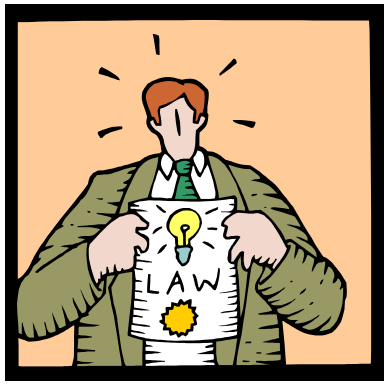
Privacy Act, Page 4 of 5

- Ensure you safeguard all personal information you receive
  - Store in out-of-sight location
  - Do not leave out in open spaces
  - Take steps to properly destroy data to preclude identity theft
  - Only share with individuals having an official need to know
  - Do not lose control of the record / data
  - Use caution when posting data to shared drives, multi-access calendars, etc.

Privacy Act, Page 5 of 5

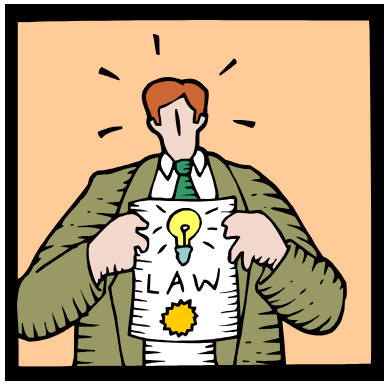
- Gather and use personal data as required by your job
- File and protect personal data in accordance with governing policy and regulation
- Dispose of personal data using approved shredding methods
- Store and purge records containing personal data in accordance with governing policy and regulation

NMCI / Navy / DoD,
Page 1 of 3



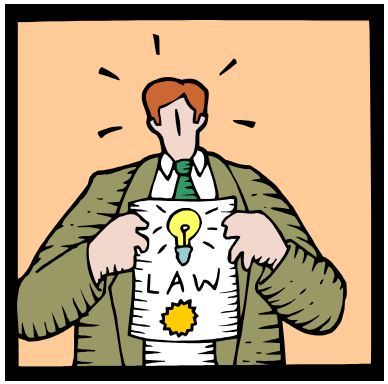
- USN and USMC NMCI blocks all access to commercial e-mail services such as Yahoo!, Hotmail, America Online, Google, etc.
- Applies to sailors, Marines, DoD employees and contractors using Navy Department computers
- Navy and Marine Corps personnel attached to Army, Air Force or joint commands fall under these policies

NMCI / Navy / DoD,
Page 2 of 3



- This restriction does NOT block access to and use of commercial search engines
- NMCI users cannot:
  - Automatically forward official Navy e-mail to commercial account or use a commercial account for official government business without approval
  - Install of modify computer hardware of software without approval
  - Use person-to-person (P2P) file sharing applications such as Kaxaa, Shareaza and OpenP2P without approval and only in support of Navy missions

NMCI / Navy / DoD,
Page 3 of 3



- NMCI users cannot, cont:
  - Circumvent or disable security measures, countermeasures or safeguards, such as firewalls, content filters and anti-virus programs
  - Participate in or contribute to activity that causes a disruption or denial of service
  - Write, code, compile, store, transmit or introduce malicious software, programs or code

Additional Information,
Page 1 of 2

- Essential Management Competencies (EMC) desk reference, Task 5.3 Manage a Diverse Workforce
- MWR Managers desk reference, Task 9.2, Prepare Correspondence and Task 9.2 enclosure, Navy Writing Guidelines
- The Gregg Reference Manual, Sabin, McGraw-Hill, New York, NY, 1999
- The Elements of Style, Shrunk and White, Allyn and Bacon, Needham Heights, MA, 2000

Additional Information,
Page 2 of 2

- Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA), Washington, DC, 1999
- Some good e-mail info: http://mailformat.dan.info/
- E-mail Essentials: Legal and Appropriate Use of E-mail, Quality Media Resources, Inc., Bellevue, WA, 1998
- The Tyranny of E-Mail:

  http://w-uh.com/articles/030308-tyranny_of_email.html

That’s all for now…

Communication effectiveness, efficiency, protocol, and regulatory compliance are literally, in your hands!

Suggestions and requests to:

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